

*HBI150 Stakeholder Forum*

July 21, 2006

VCU Student Commons

*Critical Questions for Discussion*

*Breakout Session Flipchart Notes  
Richmond Salon II*

Group II Participants:

Marian Moody, Hanover-Caroline SWCD  
Donald Wells, Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
Jack Whitney, City of Virginia Beach  
Nancy Alexander, Citizens Advisory Committee  
Christopher Miller, Piedmont Environmental Council/Virginia Conservation Network  
Sarah Weisiger, Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
Paul Ferguson, Arlington County Board of Supervisors  
John Eckman, Valley Conservation Council/Virginia Conservation Network  
Hobey Bauhan, Virginia Poultry Federation  
Andrew Protugyrou, Citizens Advisory Committee to Chesapeake Bay Council  
Bruce Lundeen, Shenandoah Valley Pure Water Forum  
Eldon James, Rappahannock River Basin Commission  
Mark Haley, Virginia Nutrient Credit Exchange Association  
Thomas G. Botkins, Jr. Virginia Manufacturers Association  
Senator Emmett Hanger, Chesapeake Bay Commission  
Larry Haas, Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences  
Steve Walz, Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy

**I. What should Virginia focus on?**

- Funding for nonpoint source
- Land protection, easements and development rights
- Look at the structure of SWCDs and RCDs
- Plug gaps in point source so there is big bang for the money expended.
- Worse sediment erosion and rainfall event offenders are VDOT.
- No oversight of nonpoint pollution (all voluntary)
- Do something about the cap on easements.
- Make citizens aware of how they can make a difference.
- Integrate nonprofit experts into this effort.
- The rural areas deserve attention and need the support for local planning to improve the capacity.
- Support for the Virginia Outdoors Foundation so they can assist in effort.

- There needs to be an alternative to fencing on farms.
  - Make agriculture economically viable.
  - The law says we “shall” do these things.
  - Define role for roundtables.
  - Need for government entities to work/cooperate together. Communication.
  - Program-driven holistic approach to nonpoint pollution.
  - Define appropriate uses of waterways then determine quality measures. Not all water bodies fit all uses.
  - Lack of organization among agencies even after problem is identified.
  - Growth management – need to focus on urban problems.
  - Focus on what can be done.
2. What should Virginia be doing for water quality protection and restoration that we are not doing? Likewise, what are we doing that we should not be doing because the practice isn’t working or isn’t producing the water quality improvements that are needed/desired?
- Focus on implementing the plans/TMDLs.
  - Consistent, adequate funding for nonpoint and point projects that are producing impacts.
  - Consistent programs implementation and monitoring progress
  - Focus and prioritize issues
  - Public education
  - Enhance technical and media efforts in producing effective public education.
  - Policy on roundtables needs to be developed at the state level.
  - Streamline and provide state support for CREP easement process.
  - Establish green building policies concerning stormwater runoff
  - Public education and awareness
  - Sediment and erosion standards based on reality
  - Lessen the communication gaps between state agencies, local government, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts; also deal with the overlaps as well.
  - Remove the septic tank and bio-solids programs from VDH and place them possibly in DEQ.
  - The agriculture standards in the Bay Act need to be enforced statewide.
  - Urban wastewater protection – penalties for noncompliance
  - Cost share for manure storage units
  - The TMDL process needs to be streamlined
  - The state economic development policy should not conflict with land use policy or water quality policy
  - Allow “buy back” of development rights so localities can plan for growth
  - Stop wetland mitigation
  - Program for funding and requirements for the urban areas for retrofitting
  - Stop top down agriculture BMPs—1 size doesn’t fit all.

- Allow the localities to identify the BMPs appropriate for their area.
  - There is too much focus on computer models and not enough focus on what is actually working (BMPs).
  - Not using resources wisely—TMDL in some waters not necessary.
  - Inconsistent housing and economic development policy as it relates to water quality
  - Enforce erosion and sediment laws or do away with them.
  - Make sure Virginia is consistent with the federal law and enforce them.
3. What roadblocks exist that might inhibit or delay the successful implementation of our cleanup plan? How do you suggest we remove or mitigate the roadblock?
- Lack of Communication
  - Lack of funding
  - Change of government appointments every 4 years having an impact on consistency.
  - Lack of local capacity to match the state money is an issue for some rural localities.
  - Too much central control
  - Don't write standards that cannot be met
  - Lack of a dedicated funding – needs to carryover between administrations
  - Lack of understanding of the public, officials, implementers.
  - Disconnect between the economic development and environmental improvement sectors.
  - Legislation calls for impaired water plan that is measurable
  - Special interest and lobbyist groups. Need a lobby for common citizen.
  - Lack of consistent money over time.
  - The average Virginian does not know the problem exists and they don't know that the water close to them is impaired.
  - Information that comes out in the media is not consistent.
  - Lack of adequate pool of technical people to implement.
  - Weak enforcement of the requirements and permitting conditions.
  - Lack of technical resources.
  - Why are we not doing what we need to force localities to clean up the point source treatments?
  - Lack of public education.
  - The new plan to be successful needs to have a better relationship between the state and local governments
4. How do we set reasonable and achievable time frames to accomplish the clean-up plan objectives?
- Don't try to do too much at once.
  - Define the use of the Bay and other waterways—define the criteria that we must meet.
  - Goals are stated but not ascribed to
  - Enforce the regulations at all levels.
  - The 2000 Bay Plan was a political plan and not an achievable one.

- We need to do what we can to champion the volunteer efforts
- The private source standards are more stringent.
- There needs to be a tiered approach with priorities and the funding to meet them.
- Governor/Secretary should say these are what need to be done and if money is not there then the legislature needs to address the issue.
- Not all local governments have the money to spend for upgrades.
- Implementers understand why we are not meeting the 2010 date
- Be consistent in the parts we address and get some funding.
- Build recognition of short, medium, and long-term actions needed to reach the goals and then implement them.
- The average citizen doesn't know about the 2010 deadline and the consequences if the state doesn't meet them.
- Focus on things that don't require legislative actions.
- Some local governments have done good stuff and they need to be held up as examples and recognized to encourage others to do the same.

#### Other Comments.

- Some plans are political but need to be scientific in nature
- There is an inconsistency with the governmental officials being elected every 4 years.
- The general public needs to be inspired and know what to do; they don't have to know why.
- Virginia has made progress and we need to speed up the process of putting water quality standards into law—let's find what works.